



**Barnstable County Children's Cove Chat and Communication
Online Terms and Conditions and Privacy Policy
Effective Date: February 09, 2021**

WHAT CHAT IS AND ISN'T: The chat platform on the Barnstable County Children's Cove website is provided by LiveChat.com. The feature is meant to provide information and support to individuals utilizing our services in ways that include, but are not limited to; sexual assault information, support to victims or concerned others (those who are seeking support for victims), and those looking for information on other services. While many users find the chat service to be supportive and helpful, it is not, nor is it intended to be, professional counseling or mental health treatment. Chat sessions are conducted by staff who are not professional therapists, social workers or counselors; they are Barnstable County Children's Cove staff members who have the training and knowledge of how to connect individuals to resources and support services for survivors of child sexual abuse, as well as their families, friends, and community members. Information shared with you through chat is not intended to be mental health or medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Also, none of the information shared with you is intended, in any way, to constitute legal advice.

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY: Your privacy and security are very important to us. The following information will help you understand what information we collect online, and how we handle that information once we collect it. This policy will tell you if we disclose that information to anyone, and what choices you have regarding how we use that information. By using the chat services, you agree to this Terms and Conditions/ Privacy Policy. The terms and conditions may change from time to time without prior notification, so please consult this document regularly for any such changes.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS DEFINITION: "Personally Identifiable Information" is information about you that would identify you, such as your name, address, contact information, date of birth, or racial, ethnic, or religious identity.

PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY: Our chat services are an online system. Our chat services are intended to be anonymous and you will NOT be required to provide your full name, address, email address, or any other Personally Identifiable Information in order to access either chat or services. If you wish to receive additional services, our staff may ask you for information such as your name, phone number or email address so that we may contact you to provide the requested services. Only provide this information to our staff. We are committed to keeping your information confidential. We will not knowingly release any confidential or personally identifiable information without your express, knowing, fully informed written consent or as required by Massachusetts law which includes mandated reporting laws. The most confidential and secure method of communication with us is via our telephone number or in-person

communication. If you are concerned about confidentiality online and wish to speak with a Barnstable County Children's Cove team member, please call (508) 375-0410.

MANDATED REPORTING: We serve individuals across the geographic area of Cape Cod and the islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket and are governed by Massachusetts law. Mandated reporting laws may require us to record and report information regarding the abuse or neglect, or suspected abuse or neglect, of someone less than 18 years of age or an incapacitated or dependent adult. If you tell us this kind of information, we may have to record it and provide it to the appropriate authorities. If it becomes clear that our staff need to make a report, it is helpful to gather as much information as possible. In that situation, the staff will inform you of your options about providing further personal information and how that information can be helpful, but the choice to share that information or, to choose not to, is yours.

RECORDS and DATA: The information conveyed by you to our staff during your online chat session is intended to be part of a private conversation between you and the staff member, and will NOT be recorded, stored, saved, or catalogued by us or our LiveChat service provider. LiveChat does not retain records of any conversations that occur. After texts or chats are terminated, transcripts are self-destructed. We do collect aggregate statistical data, such as the number of people served, in order to inform our services and report to funders. However, should you utilize the chat feature during "off" hours, or by utilizing the "contact us" form, there will be an email generated to a Barnstable County Children's Cove email address, creating a record of any personally identifiable information you provide as a part of that communication. This information will not create a record on your device and will only be used in the context outlined above.

REALITIES OF THE DIGITAL AGE: We have worked with our chat provider to make all chat communications as secure as possible. However, there are several situations that are a reality of digital communication that mean your security and privacy cannot be guaranteed. These situations include an external data breach, a virus or malware on your device, the security of the technology on your device and the possibility that someone with access to your devices may have access to your chat messages (if monitored live), calls and/ or internet. There are many things you can do to protect your privacy and confidentiality. First, you do not have to share any personal information like your age, name or where you live. We also recommend that you not record or store any sessions in order to protect your privacy. Once you have finished your chat, it is important that you close the browser window used, clean mobile device/ computer's cache and history, then erase the cookies on your computer or mobile device. This prevents anyone from going into your computer or device and checking up on your internet activity. Here is a link to more information about how to clear your text messages and internet history: <https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/how-to-clear-your-cache-on-any-browser>

INAPPROPRIATE USE OF CHAT: Understanding that the experiences of sexual violence survivors can result in strong emotions, the staff will use their best judgment in working with chat users and may decide to end a conversation if it becomes abusive or offensive.

LIMITATIONS OF LIABILITY: In no event shall Barnstable County Children’s Cove or its affiliates and their respective partners, employees, volunteers, donors, affiliates and agents (collectively “related persons”) be liable for any claims, liabilities, losses, costs, damages or injuries, including, but not limited to, any direct, indirect, punitive, special, incidental, or consequential (“damages”) arising out of or in connection with any access, use (or inability to use) or distribution of our sites and their contents, or a site linked to our sites, including any damages or injury caused by any failure of performance, error, omission, interruption, deletion, defect, delay in operation or transmission, computer/device virus, communication line failure, other computer/device malfunction, theft, destruction or unauthorized access to, alteration of or use of any asset, whether for breach of contract, tortious behavior, negligence or under any other cause of action, or any content obtained through use of the site. This is true even if Barnstable County Children’s Cove or related persons have been advised of the possibility of such damages or losses.